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15 April 1963

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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DAILY BRIEF

USSR: Marshal Zhukov, whose forced retirement in 1957 cleared the way for Khrushchev's accession to overwhelming political primacy, may soon be rehabilitated.

A Soviet military protocol officer recently proposed that the former defense minister and presidium member be invited to the US Armed Forces Day celebration in Moscow on 21 May. Omission of his name from the invitation list in recent years has evoked no Soviet comment.

Public discussions of Zhukov's past role have begun to vary. While most articles on military matters continue to reiterate charges that Zhukov followed an "antiparty line" and committed military blunders, he has been mentioned in a favorable context several times recently. If he is now to be allowed to resume a public role, the 9 May VE Day celebration is the most likely occasion.

Any degree of restoration to respectability for Zhukov would have a political motivation. His primary offense in 1957 was that he used his enormous personal popularity in an attempt to gain independence for the military from party control. His public re-emergence would be viewed as an indication of increased influence for the professional soldier as opposed to the party-political military leaders. In addition, his fall from glory was certainly engineered by Khrushchev and his return to even partial favor, therefore, probably would reflect adversely on the latter.

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Egypt-Syria-Iraq: [Arab Federation negotiations are still continuing in Cairo, and it is increasingly clear that a long period of time will be required to complete the paper framework for federation and develop an operating organization.]

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[redacted] contrary to the impressions given by some public announcements, only a loose federation is envisaged. [redacted]

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[redacted] a plebiscite would be held in Egypt, Syria, and Iraq--probably in a few months--and that a list of priorities and target dates for achievement of various stages of unification would be drawn up. [redacted]

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[redacted] for example, consolidation of the three foreign ministries might take only a year or two but that establishment of a single currency would take ten years.

[redacted]

[redacted] agreements reached so far are in general terms only and that it may take three months or more even to draft a detailed, mutually acceptable charter and constitution.]

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DAILY BRIEF

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*Laos: [Premier Souvanna Phouma is cautiously optimistic over prospects for ending the Plaine des Jarres crisis. In talks there yesterday with leaders of the opposing factions, Souvanna obtained their agreement on a temporary cease-fire pending efforts to arrange a negotiated settlement.]

[Souvanna met with Kong Le, dissident neutralist leader Colonel Deuane, and Pathet Lao military commander Singkapo. Souvanna was accompanied on his one-day visit by Deputy Premier Souphanouvong, the three ICC commissioners, and the British and Soviet ambassadors as representatives of the Geneva co-chairmen, Britain and the USSR.]

[Preceding his visit, Souvanna had sent letters to Kong Le and Colonel Deuane urging reconciliation in line with the Premier's efforts to overcome the disunity in neutralist ranks which the Pathet Lao have exploited. However, restoration of a command relationship between Kong Le and Deuane, whom Kong Le despises as a traitor, will be difficult. In addition, Kong Le probably would elect to resume fighting--hopefully with rightist military support--unless provision is made for the return of his forces to positions lost in the recent series of clashes.]

[Pathet Lao truculence and suspicions are mirrored in a communiqué issued by General Singkapo on 14 April denouncing penetration by "imperialist forces in liberated territory" in the Plaine des Jarres region and north of Vientiane, and demanding their immediate withdrawal]

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NOTES

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Indonesia - British Borneo Territories: [The 12 April attack on a border village in western Sarawak by invaders from Indonesian Borneo]

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[REDACTED] is likely to be followed by further incidents aimed at disrupting the formation of Malaysia. The attackers, who reportedly numbered only a hundred, inflicted only three casualties, but they struck and withdrew quickly, and were obviously well organized. The British are establishing air patrols along the frontier and have reinforced the capital of Sarawak with a company of commandos.

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DAILY BRIEF

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